

1. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
a client computer; and
a server computer;
the client computer and the server computer being
interconnected by a public packet switched communications
network;
the client computer being programmed to transmit to
the server computer an order acceptance request comprising a
plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a
purchase, including multiple options of at least one of the
terms or conditions of the offer;
the server computer being programmed to process the
order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria
and, based on the processing of the order acceptance
request, to transmit to the client computer an order
acceptance response comprising amendment to the proposed
offer for the purchase, the amendment including selection of
an option of the at least one of the terms or conditions.

2. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
a client computer; and
a server computer;
the client computer and the server computer being
interconnected by a public packet switched communications
network;
the client computer being programmed to transmit to
the server computer an order acceptance request comprising a
plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a
purchase;
the server computer being programmed to process the
order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria
and, based on the processing of the order acceptance
request, to transmit to the client computer an order

15 acceptance response comprising a plurality of amendments to
16 the proposed offer for the purchase.

1 3. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
2 a client computer; and
3 a server computer;
4 the client computer and the server computer being
5 interconnected by a public packet switched communications
6 network;
7 the client computer being programmed to transmit to
8 the server computer an order acceptance request comprising a
9 plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a
10 purchase, the order acceptance request comprising a
11 plurality of modular elements individually protected by
12 cryptographic security codes;
13 the server computer being programmed to process the
14 order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria,
15 including authentication of the cryptographic security codes
16 and examination of the modular elements individually
17 protected by the cryptographic security codes, and, based on
18 the processing of the order acceptance request, to transmit
19 to the client computer an order acceptance response based on
20 the pre-programmed criteria.

1 4. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
2 a client computer; and
3 a server computer;
4 the client computer and the server computer being
5 interconnected by a public packet switched communications
6 network;
7 the client computer being programmed to transmit to
8 the server computer an order acceptance request comprising a
9 plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a purchase;

the server computer being programmed to process the order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria, and, based on the processing of the order acceptance request, to transmit to the client computer an order acceptance response based on the pre-programmed criteria, the processing of the order acceptance request being performed by a controller module that handles processing of the order acceptance request that is primarily not specific to a particular application of the electronic commerce system to which the order acceptance request pertains and that initiates a plurality of calls to a plurality of plug-in modules that handle processing of the order acceptance request that is primarily specific to the particular application of the electronic commerce system and that can be readily replaced by different plug-in modules that handle processing primarily specific to different applications of the electronic commerce system.

5. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
a client computer; and
a server computer;
the client computer and the server computer being interconnected by a public packet switched communications network;

the client computer being programmed to transmit to the server computer an order acceptance request comprising a plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a purchase;

the server computer being programmed to process the order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria, and, based on the processing of the order acceptance request, to transmit to the client computer an order acceptance response based on the pre-programmed criteria,

16 the server computer further being programmed to handle
17 fraud-avoidance processing of the order acceptance request
18 based on contents of the order acceptance request other than
19 price, purchaser identity, and seller identity.

1 6. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
2 a client computer; and
3 a server computer;
4 the client computer and the server computer being
5 interconnected by a public packet switched communications
6 network;
7 the client computer being programmed to transmit to
8 the server computer an order acceptance request comprising a
9 plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a
10 purchase, the terms or conditions comprising a price;
11 the server computer being programmed to process the
12 order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria
13 and, based on the processing of the order acceptance
14 request, to transmit to the client computer an order
15 acceptance response comprising amendment to the proposed
16 offer for the purchase, the amendment including an amended
17 price based on terms or conditions recited in the order
18 acceptance request that are less than optimal based on the
19 pre-programmed criteria.

1 7. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
2 a client computer; and
3 a server computer;
4 the client computer and the server computer being
5 interconnected by a public packet switched communications
6 network;
7 the client computer being programmed to transmit to
8 the server computer an order acceptance request comprising a

9 plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a
10 purchase;

11 the server computer being programmed to process the
12 order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria,
13 and, based on the processing of the order acceptance
14 request, to transmit to the client computer an order
15 acceptance response based on the pre-programmed criteria,
16 the server further being programmed to initiate a call to a
17 database of a virtual warehouse in which merchants can store
18 virtual inventories of items, to ensure that a sufficient
19 virtual inventory exists for the purchase.

1 8. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
2 a plurality of client computers; and
3 a server computer;

4 the client computer and the server computer being
5 interconnected by a public packet switched communications
6 network;

7 one of the client computers being programmed to
8 transmit to the server computer a first order acceptance
9 request comprising a plurality of terms or conditions of a
10 proposed offer for a purchase of a gift certificate;

11 another of the client computers being programmed to
12 transmit a second order acceptance request comprising the
13 gift certificate;

14 the server computer being programmed to process the
15 order acceptance requests based on pre-programmed criteria,
16 and, based on the processing of the order acceptance
17 request, to transmit to the client computers an order
18 acceptance response based on the pre-programmed criteria,
19 the server computer further being programmed to store gift
20 certificate information in a database when the server
21 computer receives the first order acceptance request and to

22 examine the database when the server computer receives the
23 second order acceptance request.

1 9. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
2 a client computer; and
3 a server computer;
4 the client computer and the server computer being
5 interconnected by a public packet switched communications
6 network;
7 the client computer being programmed to transmit to
8 the server computer an order acceptance request comprising a
9 plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a
10 purchase of tokens to be redeemed for micro-purchases;
11 the server computer being programmed to process the
12 order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria,
13 and, based on the processing of the order acceptance
14 request, to transmit to the client computer an order
15 acceptance response based on the pre-programmed criteria,
16 the server further being programmed to increase a number of
17 tokens in a token database that are available for use in
18 exchange for the micro-purchases.

1 10. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
2 a client computer; and
3 a server computer;
4 the client computer and the server computer being
5 interconnected by a public packet switched communications
6 network;
7 the client computer being programmed to transmit to
8 the server computer an order acceptance request comprising a
9 plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a
10 purchase of a subscription;

11 the server computer being programmed to process the
12 order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria,
13 and, based on the processing of the order acceptance
14 request, to transmit to the client computer an order
15 acceptance response based on the pre-programmed criteria,
16 the server further being programmed to update a subscription
17 table in order to reflect the purchase of the subscription.

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